

In the Claims:

1. (Amended) A method for resolving the most probable digital fingerprint from a circuit, the circuit outputting a digital fingerprint comprising a series of bits, the method comprising the steps of

- (a) polling the circuit at power-up for a digital fingerprint;
- (b) recording the digital fingerprint;
- (c) repeating steps (a) and (b) a desired number of times; and,
- (d) calculating ~~the~~ a most probable digital fingerprint from the values yielded in steps (a) – (c).

3. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of

- (e) calculating ~~the~~ a stability value of at least one bit in said digital fingerprint.

5. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the digital fingerprint comprises at least two sections, each section comprising a series of bits, and wherein the method further comprises the steps of

- (e) calculating ~~the~~ a stability value of each bit in said digital fingerprint;
- (f) for each section, storing the stability value of the least stable bit in each section in association with a section identifier and the most probable digital fingerprint calculated in step (d).

6. (Amended) An apparatus providing a digital fingerprint comprising a digital fingerprint circuit, said digital fingerprint circuit outputting a digital fingerprint comprising a plurality of bits corresponding to electrical characteristics of a plurality of devices;

a control circuit, said control circuit operably connected to the digital fingerprint circuit and programmed to iteratively read the digital fingerprint a predetermined number of times; and,

wherein the control circuit calculates the most probable digital fingerprint based on the iterative reads of the digital fingerprint circuit.

11. (Amended) A method for resolving an identification, said method comprising the steps of

- (a) receiving a digital fingerprint corresponding to characteristics of a circuit;
  - (b) dividing the digital fingerprint into at least two sections, the sections comprising a series of bits;
  - (c) storing the sections in association with an index identification in a database;
- and
- (d) repeating steps (a) – (c) a desired number of times.

16. (Amended) The method of claim 15 wherein the database comprises at least two section tables each of which ~~store~~ stores a separate section of the fingerprints in association with a corresponding index identification; and wherein the scanning step (b) comprises scanning the section tables with corresponding sections of the digital fingerprint received in step (a).